

The Golden Rule

Matthew 7:1-12; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 298-314, 640; *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 123-137

Sarah frowned. The other girls in the lunchroom were pointing at her and laughing. Why were they always so unkind? Then the thought came to her: What would Jesus do? And she looked right at those girls and smiled.

Jesus taught that we should treat others as we want to be treated. Imagine that we are sitting on a mountainside with a young man named Ephraim listening to Jesus.

Ephraim got up just before daylight. Would he be pulling weeds in the garden today? Then his father spoke. "Today we will go to listen to Jesus."

Ephraim was happy. He had heard that Jesus was the Messiah. And he really wanted to hear what Jesus had to say!

Jesus was healing people by the seashore, and the beach was filling up with people. Ephraim and his family hurried to find a place. They watched as some rulers arrived. The rulers frowned at the crowd.

Jesus began to climb the hill away from the beach. The people pushed along behind Him until they came to a quiet meadow. Jesus sat down near a tree. His disciples pressed through the crowd to be near Him. All around

Him people sat

quietly as He began to

speak. The rulers stood in the shade of a nearby tree. Sit down? Never! Their robes might get dirty. Besides, they thought, we are better than these people. We are better than this Jesus.

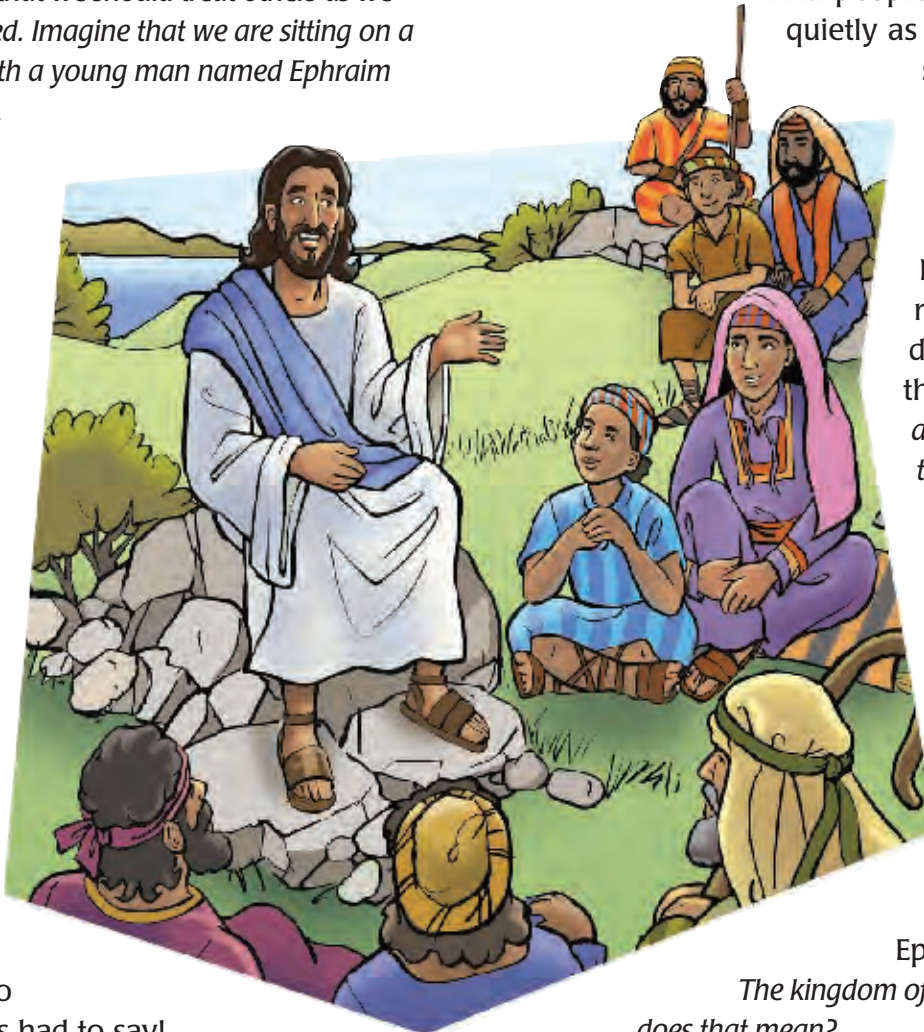
Jesus spoke calmly, but so all could hear. "Make the kingdom of God first in your life."

Ephraim thought,

The kingdom of God? What does that mean?

"Don't judge other people and you won't be judged yourself."

Ephraim thought of the rulers who believed they were better than others. He wondered, *Could it be possible that God cares about humble*



The Message

Jesus helps me treat others as I want to be treated.

Memory Verse

**“ ‘So in everything,
do to others what
you would have them
do to you’ ”**

(Matthew 7:12, NIV).

people? Is there any place in Jesus' kingdom for me and my family?

Then Jesus told a story about a person who had a speck of dust in their eye. Ephraim had experienced that once. He remembered how it hurt. He had blinked and blinked, but the speck just wouldn't come out. Finally, his father had removed it.

Jesus said, "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye, and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take out the speck,' when all the time there is a plank in your own? You hypocrite (pretender), first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Ephraim grinned as he imagined how it would look to have a big plank of wood in his eye. Everyone was laughing—except some of the rulers.

Jesus spoke of God's love. Then He announced a rule of His kingdom. "So in everything, do to

others what you would have them do to you."

Now Ephraim understood. In Jesus' kingdom, everyone would treat everyone else fairly. They would not find fault with each other. Instead, they would want Jesus to remove their faults. People would live to serve others.





S A B B A T H

DO Climb a hill, if possible, and read your lesson story with your family. Imagine that you are sitting on the hill on which Jesus sat as He preached His sermon.

READ Read Matthew 7:12 together.

DO Sing together "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129). Pray that Jesus will help you not to judge others.

Jesus' sermon was full of ways to live that He knew would make people happy.



S U N D A Y

READ Read Matthew 7:1, 2 for family worship. Then hold a family court as follows: Choose a judge. Choose a person to be on trial (defendant) and the person bringing the charges (plaintiff). The plaintiff makes up a story about the defendant (they didn't do the dishes, etc.). The defendant must tell why they did or didn't do what they are accused of. The judge strikes the gavel, says Matthew 7:1, then says, "Next case."

DO We need to judge between right and wrong, but leave judging others to God. Read 1 Samuel 16:7 together.

M O N D A Y

READ Read Matthew 7:3-5 with your family. Show with your hands the sizes of a speck and a plank.

DO Draw around a ruler on paper. Add the different measures. Write your memory verse on it. Then cut it apart after each word. Mix the pieces, then put them in order. Use this each day this week.

T U E S D A Y

READ Together with your family, read and discuss how God treats people (Matthew 7:7-11).

DO Feel a stone and a piece of bread about the same size. What is the difference? Would your parents give you a stone when you are hungry? Why would God do any less? Read Matthew 7:11 again.

DO Think of someone you have treated unfairly. How do you think that person felt? How did you feel? Discuss this with your family.

DO Review your memory verse.

W E D N E S D A Y

SHARE Read and discuss Matthew 7:12 for worship. Read about the same idea in Luke 6:31.

DO Have you done a kind act for the person whose name you wrote on the spark you made in Sabbath School? (Or make a spark-shaped cutout and color it yellow and use it. Write on it the name of someone for whom you will do something kind.)

DO Say your memory verse without help.



THURSDAY

READ With your family read in the Bible of someone who treated another person kindly. See 2 Kings 5:1-5 and Luke 10:30-35.

READ Now read about someone who treated another person unkindly: Genesis 37:17-24; Matthew 18:23-34.

DO How do you want to treat people? Say your memory verse in your own words.

FRIDAY

DO Use a plank and some sawdust as you tell your lesson story to your family at worship. At the end, say the memory verse together.

ASK Ask your family to write on a paper the names of five people they have treated fairly this week.

DO Read Ephesians 4:32. Make a small "bonfire" from some wooden sticks (no real fire). Place the paper spark that you made on the "bonfire" as you sing "Pass It On" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 130) with the following words:

It only takes a spark to get a kind act going, / And soon
all those around can warm up in its glowing; / For
Jesus made the golden rule; once I experience it,
/ I will be kind to everyone; / I want to pass it on.

The Golden Rule

PUZZLE

Directions: First, connect the dots to identify instruments that can share God's love. Then answer the questions to discover what Jesus teaches us to do.

1. How did Jesus treat sick people?
2. What part of the body was featured in the story about the golden rule?
3. What do we overlook in our own eyes?
4. How much dust hurts your eyes?
5. What do we learn from Jesus?

